

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

INTRODUCTION OF THE JACOB JOSEPH CHESTNUT-JOHN MICHAEL GIBSON CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER ACT OF 1999

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 3, 1999

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I am re-introducing the Jacob Joseph Chestnut-John Michael Gibson United States Capitol Visitor Center Act of 1999 (Chestnut-Gibson Act), which I originally introduced shortly after the deaths of Capitol Police officers Jacob Joseph Chestnut and John Michael Gibson. My bill authorizes the Architect of the Capitol "to plan, construct, equip, administer, and maintain a Capitol Visitor Center under the East Plaza of the Capitol" grounds.

The primary purpose of the bill is to increase public safety and security. According to the Capitol Police and the U.S. Capitol Police Board, a visitor center would provide significant distance between the Capitol and visitors, and for a host of reasons they have documented, would make the Capitol more secure. No one knows whether Officer Chestnut or Special Agent Gibson or, for that matter, any other officer or individual would have been spared had a visitor center been in place last July. What we do know is that our nineteenth century Capitol was not built with anything like today's security hazards in mind.

I have also been a strong supporter of a Capitol Visitor Center since coming to Congress in 1991, not only for security reasons but also because the existing conditions here do not ensure the health, convenience, and cordiality that our constituents are entitled to. Members are often forced to address constituents seated on stone steps outdoors. In the blistering heat and merciless cold of Washington, visitors wait in line outdoors to tour the Capitol. Last summer, the hottest on record in the United States, saw tourists faint while waiting in line and then rushed inside to be treated by our physicians. Even if the Capitol had not incurred a terrible tragedy, we would be in need of a more civil way to welcome the people we represent.

Although the Congress did not pass this bill in the last Congress, it recognized the urgency of building a Capitol Visitor Center by providing \$100 million for its construction in the Omnibus Appropriations bill. However, the appropriation does not contain any guidelines for the Architect of the Capitol to follow in administering the project. My bill would require the Architect to work within the framework of recommendations issued in 1995, to identify alternatives for construction to achieve cost savings, and to submit a report containing the plans and designs within 120 days of passage of my legislation. This procedure would ensure that the Capitol Visitor Center is undertaken expeditiously and cost-effectively.

I feel a special obligation in introducing this bill because the residents of the District have a special relationship with the Capitol Police. In 1992, when there was a large spike in crime in the District, Congress passed the United States Capitol Police Jurisdiction Act, a bill I introduced authorizing the Capitol Police to patrol parts of the Capitol Hill residential community closest to the Capitol. Capitol Police officers were not only willing; they were enthusiastic to use their excellent training and professionalism for the benefit of residents and the many tourists and visitors whose safety might be compromised by having to travel through high-crime areas in order to get to the Capitol.

Our foremost obligation is to protect all who visit or work here and to spare no legitimate consideration in protecting the United States Capitol. The Capitol is a temple of democracy and is the most important symbol of the open society in which we live. It is even more so than the White House, in part because the President's workplace is also a residence and cannot be entirely open. The Capitol symbolizes our free and open society not only because it is accessible but also because of what transpires here. It is here that the people come to petition their government, to lobby and to persuade us, and ultimately to discharge us if we stray too far from their democratic demands. Thus, we neither have nor would we want the option to make the Capitol more difficult to access. After last summer's tragedy, we have an obligation to demonstrate that security is not inconsistent with democracy.

JOSE AND KATHY VILLEGAS ARE RECIPIENTS OF THE 1998 APPLE PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION AWARD

HON. HEATHER WILSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 3, 1999

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, I wish to bring to your attention an honor given to Jose and Kathy Villegas, residents of the great state of New Mexico. Jose and Kathy Villegas have received the 1998 Apple Parent Involvement in Education (PIE) Award.

Jose and Kathy Villegas received this award because their children Candace Marie, age 13 and Joseph, Jr. age 11 took the initiative to write a letter of nomination to Apple PIE Awards. Our most important job as parents is providing our children with values, teaching the difference between right and wrong and setting examples of respect for ourselves, others and our community. Jose and Kathy Villegas obviously have done this with their children. The nomination letter included a description of how their parents were instru-

mental in getting a classroom addition at their elementary school and a stop light at a busy intersection used by school children. Jose and Kathy Villegas are involved in many task forces working on issues important to children's education. The Villegas' story provides an excellent example of how parent involvement can make a positive difference in their children's lives, the local school and their community.

Jose and Kathy Villegas' story is part of a feature story in the November 1998 issue of Working Mother titled: Classroom Champions. As the only individuals to receive this award in the United States, they stand as an example to all of us. Join me today in recognizing recipients of the 1998 Apple Parent Involvement in Education Award, Jose and Kathy Villegas.

NATIONAL EYE DONOR MONTH

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 3, 1999

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to the attention of my colleagues and the public that March is National Eye Donor Month. National recognition of Eye Donor Month dates back to the very early days of transplantation, when corneas were the only human transplants. Now, transplantations are common medical procedures by which people may give so that others can live better, fuller, healthier lives.

National Eye Donor Month honors the thousands of Americans who, over the past 55 years, have each left behind a priceless legacy—their eyes. Since the first transplant agency was founded in New York City in 1944, sight has been restored to over half a million individuals by means of cornea transplantation.

Eye Donor Month is also about increasing public awareness of the continuing need for donors. Many people are still unaware of how easy it is to become an eye donor. All a donor needs to do is sign a card and announce to his or her family the intent to leave behind this special gift.

I am confident that if more Americans realized the true extent of the need for transplants, many more would willingly donate their corneas, once they can no longer use them. More than 40,000 Americans will need cornea transplants this year. Thousands of researchers will need donor eye tissue to explore prevention and treatment of blinding diseases.

Understandably, most people do not like to think about their own deaths, nor discuss the matter with their families. As a result, they frequently put off signing their donor cards until it is too late. I hope that more people will instead follow the example of a young boy in my district, Nathan Sheinfeld of Scarsdale, NY. At

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

age 9, Nathan became a living eye donor. When faced with the loss of his left eye after a golfing incident, one of his first thoughts was to ask if it could possibly be used by someone else. Only a few days after his accident, Nathan gave the gift of sight to a 53-year-old man.

Thankfully, very few people lose their sight in such a tragic way. But we can all follow Nathan's example by promising to donate our eyes when we no longer need them. I encourage people to discuss this important issue with their families, as Nathan did. By arranging to donate his eye, this young boy has shown us that some good can result even from a tragic loss.

Our nation's eye banks—non-profit agencies operating under the umbrella of the Eye Bank Association of America—have done a heroic job of restoring sight to blind people. Today, cornea transplantation is the most common transplant procedure performed, with an extremely high success rate of nearly 90 percent.

This incredible success rate is due in part to a meticulous screening process which separates out corneas unsuitable for transplantation. These may be used for research purposes in surgical training and medical education. So, while each donated eye is put to good use, such a selective screening process must be supported by a large number of donations.

Right now, there are simply not enough donors. We must change that. I want to encourage my colleagues to celebrate National Eye Donor Month by working closely with our Nation's eye banks to educate the American public about how they can help others to see. Let us all aim to increase the number of eyes available for transplantation, so that we may illuminate the darkness for so many of our fellow citizens.

TRIBUTE TO HANNAH COVINGTON
MCGEE

HON. ROBIN HAYES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 3, 1999

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Hannah Covington McGee, a woman who was dedicated to serve in her community and at Wingate University in Wingate, North Carolina.

Mrs. McGee, was a native of Rockingham, North Carolina. The McGees moved to Wingate 6½ years ago when her husband, Jerry, was named president of Wingate University. Together they have raised two sons and served the thousands of students who have attended Wingate University under their tenure.

Jerry and Hannah McGee have been married 33 years. They have been sweethearts ever since his high school football days in Richmond County, North Carolina. Dr. McGee often referred to his wife as "the girl with the ponytail who stole my heart."

At Wingate University, Mrs. McGee, an art lover, took a keen interest in the new fine arts center. She helped lead the fund-raising cam-

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paign for a new George A. Batte Fine Arts Center and assisted with its interior decoration. As the wife of the President, Mrs. McGee attended numerous dinners, graduations and special functions at Wingate, that she was not required to attend. But she shared her husband's commitment to the University and was honored to participate.

In the community, Mrs. McGee was tireless in her efforts to serve. She helped launch English as a second language program in the Union County schools. Mrs. McGee was on the Board of Directors at the Union County Players, and she helped in restoring the M.B. Dry Memorial Chapel on campus.

Most recently, the McGees were in Tortola in the British Virgin Islands where Dr. McGee was on a three month sabbatical to relax and spend more time with his wife. In remarks Dr. McGee released, he said, "She was the mother, wife, daughter and sister that everyone dreams of—one of the easiest people to love who ever lived." Hannah McGee will be missed. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a remarkable woman.

CELEBRATING THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SECURUS HOUSE
IN CLAYTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

HON. MAC COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 3, 1999

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate and commemorate the anniversary of the Securus House in Clayton County, Georgia. In 1983, three members of the Clayton County/Henry County Women's Council of Realtors, Tricia Capps, Jane Cox, and Betsy Ramsey discussed options for a community project with Anne Plant, Director of Family and Children Services. These concerned citizens joined together to establish a badly needed facility for battered women. On March 9, 1999, the Securus House will celebrate fifteen years of work to ease and overcome family violence.

With well over 82,000 men, women, and children requesting assistance from this community project, the Securus House is a daily, working example of what local communities are capable of accomplishing.

Every day, the Securus House makes strides toward the elimination of domestic violence. Although it has sheltered over 3,400 women and children, tragically, between 1988 and 1998 in Clayton County, one hundred and seventeen women, children, and men died as the result of domestic violence. Their lives will be remembered in a candlelight vigil as part of the anniversary commemoration.

I congratulate and commend the Securus House and Clayton County for their tremendous efforts on behalf of the community and for the difference they make every day.

MARY MCAFEE NAMED THE
MILKEN FAMILY FOUNDATION
NATIONAL EDUCATOR

HON. HEATHER WILSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 3, 1999

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, I wish to bring to your attention the honor bestowed upon Mary McAfee, Principal of Zuni Elementary Magnet School, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Ms. McAfee has been named to receive the 1998 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award.

Mary McAfee is one of 160 outstanding educators from around our great country selected for this honor. The criterion for this award includes exceptional educational talent and promise and distinguished achievement in developing innovative educational curricula, programs and/or teaching methods. Within her school, Zuni Elementary, Ms. McAfee provides leadership and models the behaviors identified in the criteria. By providing the example she raises the standard for all teachers at Zuni Elementary, supporting a team environment for children to learn.

This Award is the reflection of the many lives Mary McAfee has touched. With all of the talk about how to improve education, Mary McAfee is actually making those improvements for the children of Zuni Elementary and for our great community of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Please join me in thanking and honoring Mary McAfee for those contributions.

IN HONOR OF DEPUTY MAYOR ANGELO
CORTINAS AND COUNCILMAN ANSELMO
MILLAN, FOR THEIR DEDICATION TO THE
HISPANIC COMMUNITY

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 3, 1999

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the late Honorable Angelo Cortinas and the Honorable Anselmo Millan for their dedication and commitment to the Hispanic Community.

In his days as a detective for the Office of the Sheriff, Deputy Mayor Angelo Cortinas worked tirelessly for the citizens of Essex County. Responsible for more than 2,000 arrests during his 26 years on the force, Mr. Cortinas was committed to the safety and well being of the community. More specifically, Mr. Cortinas devoted his life and career to the betterment of Latinos and the Hispanic Community.

Through hard work and perseverance, Mr. Cortinas' grassroots efforts provided many services to the Latinos in my district. He served as founding member on the Hispanic Emergency Council, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the Hispanic Law Enforcement Society of Essex County. He also served as Chairman of Club Espana, Vice President of the National Association of Latino Trustees, Honorary member of the Cuban American Association, and as a member of the State